

# **COLUMBIA RIVER REGIONAL FORUM**

## **TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM**

November 8, 2002

### **FACILITATOR'S SUMMARY NOTES ON FUTURE ACTIONS**

Facilitator: Donna Silverberg

The following notes are a summary of issues that are intended to point out future actions or issues that may need further discussion at upcoming meetings. These notes are not intended to be the "record" of the meeting, only a reminder for TMT members.

#### **Chum Survey and Operations:**

Today's conference call was held to discuss chum spawning status and operations. Oregon did a site visit earlier today and reported an increase in fish numbers since Tuesday. 57 chum were observed in the areas around Hamilton and Ives and 7 redds were found. Numbers of Chinook were also counted. The current Bonneville tailwater elevation is being operated at 11.3'. Oregon requested that the elevation be increased to a minimum of 11.5' to provide for chum spawning and for Chinook in Hamilton and Hardy Creek areas as well as the slough above Hamilton.

**DISCUSSION:** Paul Wagner noted that the BiOps' 120-125 kcfs should result in meeting the 11.5' minimum tailwater elevation that salmon managers' discussions have supported. However, BOR and BPA noted that, given the lack of a rain event thus far, this operation could negatively affect the Grand Coulee elevation of 1283' that has been discussed at TMT and IT to support resident fish needs—as well as future operations if rain does not occur soon. Instead, the COE suggested the 11.3' elevation be held until there is a significant rain event in the Cascades and in eastern and northern parts of the region that provides inflows to Grand Coulee. The BOR agreed to wait until there is precip and a rise in Hamilton Creek. NOAA Fisheries expressed that that a higher elevation would be beneficial AND they must also consider the long term sustainability of the operation. As such, they prefer to take a conservative approach, operate in accordance with natural precipitation, and maintain 11.3' until a rain event allows the elevation to increase.

On the other hand, USFWS and Oregon supported an 11.5' minimum elevation for spawning that is occurring now and dewater redds later, if weather conditions make such an action necessary. Ron Boyce stated that he did not believe that 2/10 of a foot at GCL and a 2-3 kcfs to meet this request would break the hydro system, and strongly preferred a minimum tailwater of 11.5' below Bonneville. The USFWS agreed. Neither agency felt it would be beneficial to elevate the conflict to IT.

**ACTION:** The operation will continue at a tailwater of 11.3', while also maintaining a smoother, more stable level. TMT will revisit the issue at next Wednesday's TMT meeting and hope for a big rain event over the weekend.

**ACTION:** Paul Wagner will provide Oregon with a detailed written rationale explaining why the request for 11.5 cannot be implemented at this time.